

## QUEUING

Philpot responds to the touch  
on his shoulder, a friend  
in the slow-moving queue.

But it's a different hand,  
more recent, replacing  
a previous queue-dweller.

What are they trying to tell  
him, friend and stranger alike?  
Have earlier ones broken

the line? Have they lacked  
endurance and fallen out,  
died? Refusing to panic,

Philpot acknowledges his new  
friend, marks his own spot  
again, and watches for movement.

## PHILPOT'S PROGRESS

"He stared at her with envy  
as if she was something  
he could not afford to buy."

He stared at her wondering  
why she evoked that image,  
thinking it no longer true.

He blinked away the embarrassment  
of Philpot the skiver finding  
his doctor sick, of Philpot

growing deformed, a broken-  
off, discoloured toe-nail  
in his hand.

Now he was like a driver,  
short of his goal, about to reverse --  
for winning always turned into something else.